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ABSTRACT

The major concern of this handbook is one method designed to accomplish human as well as physical development in the community--the problem identification survey method. Other methods of community development are described briefly. The problem identification survey is a method used to identify citizens to serve on a community development committee at the local level. In the process of identifying committee members, a list of community problems is obtained. The community development committee, once organized, reviews community problem--alternative solutions to the problems are identified and analyzed by subcommittees or task forces that include people not serving on overall committees. The individuals necessary for the implementation of the survey and the seven steps necessary to initiate this type of survey are explained in detail. (Author/IRT)

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THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

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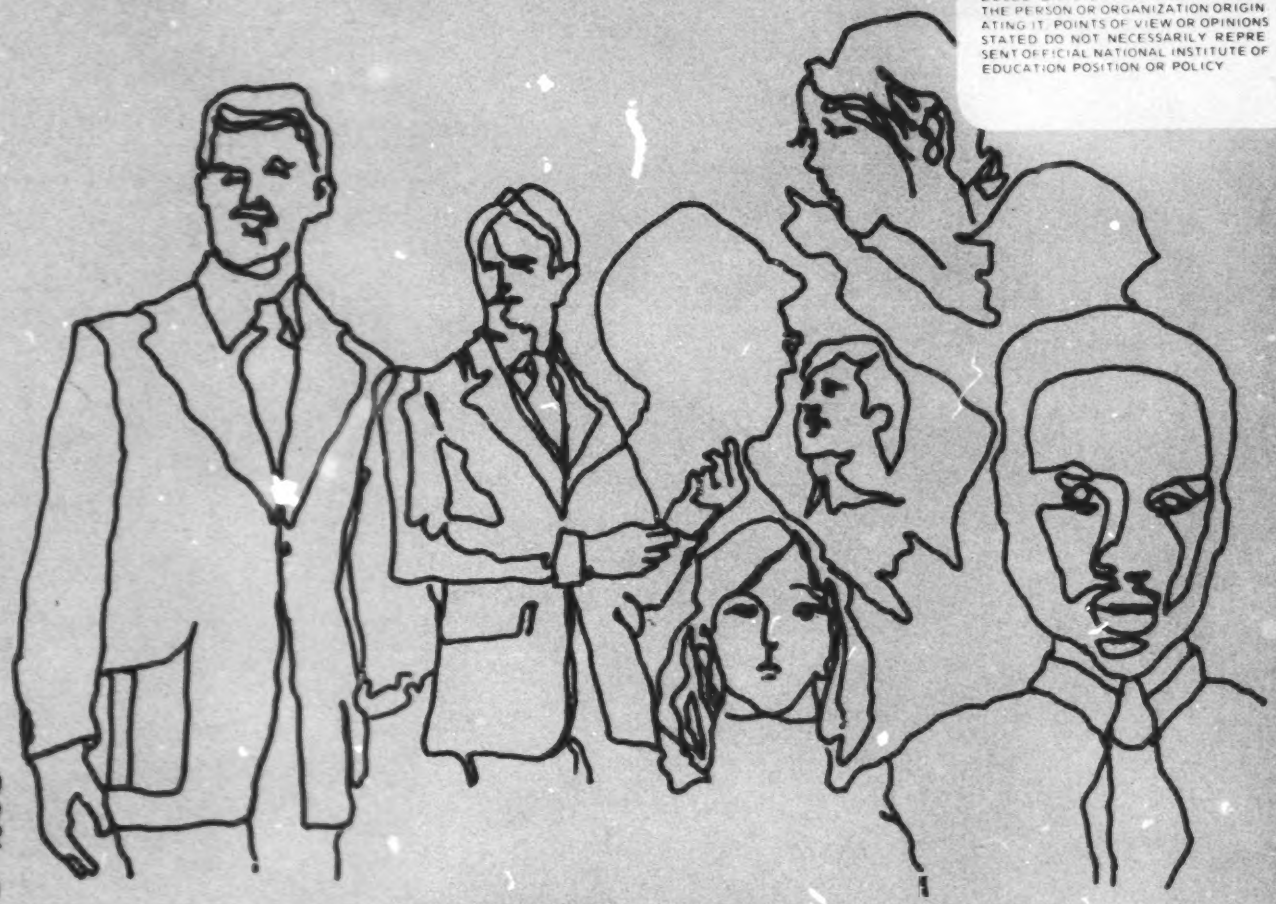

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AN APPROACH FOR INVOLVING CITIZENS IN COMMUNITY DECISION MAKING

Southern Community Resource Development Committee

Extension Division
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University
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INVOLVING CITIZENS IN COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING

"Whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government; whenever things get so far wrong as to attract their notice, they may be relied on to set them to rights." Thomas Jefferson (letter to Dr. Price)

Our nation's early leaders believed it possible to build a free society of self-reliant, self-confident people who would be the most creative on earth. The Land Grant College has helped to insure that this cherished inheritance flourishes. Through the Cooperative Extension Service, community resource development provides the opportunity to explain choices open to citizens in rural and urban communities concerning their problems through community-minded programs. The community resource development process supports every effort made to further strengthen and broaden community structures through which citizens of all socio-economic groups may participate more effectively in developing their home communities.

The principles of democratic decision-making provide the value context for community development. When these principles are applied in the field, the resultant expectation is a free and open decision-making process. To insure this, the following democratic principles should be considered:

PEOPLE can influence their destiny--people have the right to create a community environment of their choice;

PEOPLE have the right of self government--participation in community decision-making should be open to all individuals;

PEOPLE have the right of freedom of discussion--any person has the right to be heard in open discussion;

PEOPLE in the majority must respect the rights of those in the minority--all socio-economic groups have the right to be involved in community decision-making.

The manner and degree in which citizens are involved is determined to a large extent by the strategy utilized in attempting to influence community decisions. The following strategies may not be all-inclusive but they do provide a basis for an in-depth analysis of community decision-making in the real world.

DO-IT-YOURSELF

This strategy is based on the assumption that a community or locality is relatively autonomous and that problems may be solved wholly through the interaction of local citizens. Locality-development strategy is a self-contained activity where citizens organize themselves, analyze the current situation, define the problem(s), identify available local resources, develop a course of action, and solve their problems. Many community problems of lesser magnitude can be solved by this "do-it-yourself" strategy.

PERSUASIVE POWER

This strategy attempts to bring about community development within generally accepted legal norms through the use of coercive tactics. These tactics are designed to influence the behavior of local citizens by stressing possible sanctions if situations are not changed. The coercive power works within the system and does not overtly attempt to destroy the existing system and subsystems. It is dependent upon persuasive pressure rather than violence. This approach is legitimized through the political, legislative and judicial process to enforce the law; i. e., school integration, pollution control and zoning. Another example of the power by force approach is the "strings" attached to the availability of funds for development; i. e., funds are available only if certain changes are made or certain activities undertaken. However, not all coercive power comes from agencies or from "the top down" because many local citizens exert this approach through strikes, boycotts, marches, sit-ins, and "buttonholing" legislators.

DIRECTIVE PLANNING

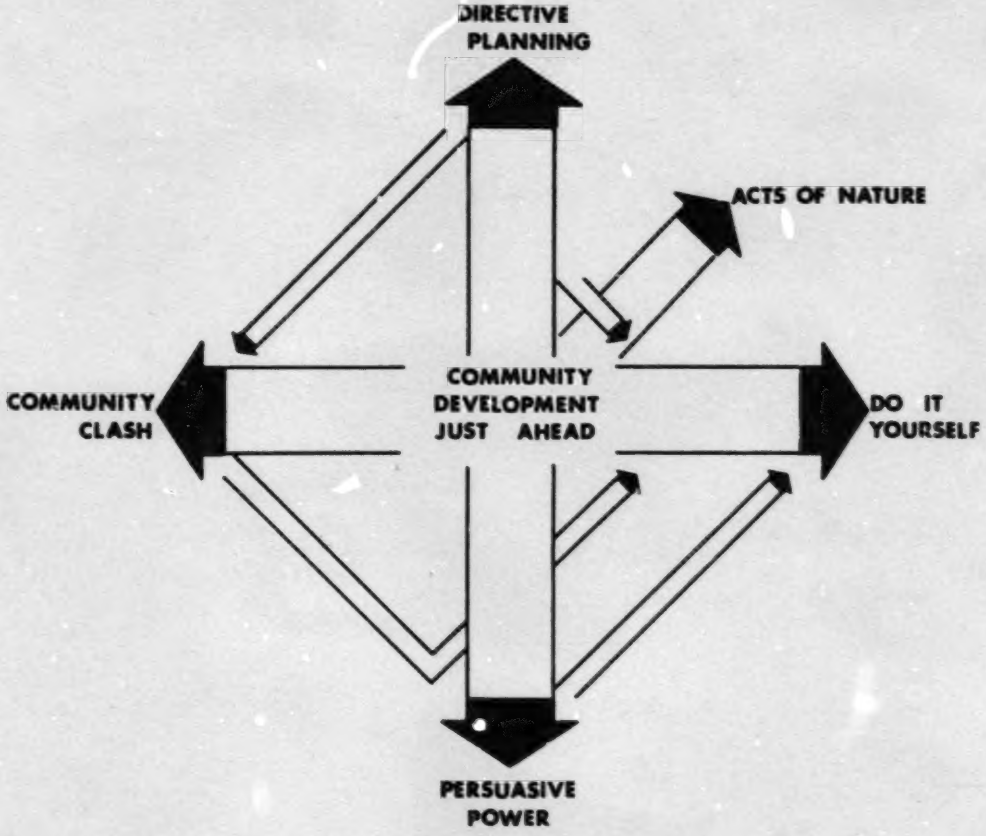
By using this approach, program planners shape the direction and course of the community's growth and development with their regulations. Problems are identified and listed. Suggested alternatives usually blend with on-going agency programs. The agenda for development of communities is set as a result of predetermined plans and programs that fit within the resources of the agency. Citizens are primarily used as a sounding board for agency program needs rather than citizen - community needs.

COMMUNITY CLASH

This approach is designed to destroy rather than to put pressure on the existing system or sub-systems. Activists lead citizens to believe that community change is more likely to occur through the replacement of the existing system. Aggressive behavior, including violent and conflict tactics, are the accepted mode of operation in the community-clash approach. Violence may be directed at individuals, groups or physical facilities. Examples of this type of approach are riots, burning, looting, bombing, killing of leaders, attacking law enforcement officers, stopping farmers on the way to the market, etc.

ACTS OF NATURE

In a few instances communities have achieved development as a response to such natural tragedies as flood, hurricane, fire, tornado, etc. Even nations have responded and have pooled their resources for rapid development after major disasters. When citizens put aside personal gripes and work for the overall benefit of the community, substantial development can take place. It appears that these "acts of nature" bring forth the leadership necessary to help communities develop at a more rapid pace. However, one cannot wait for an "act of nature" before taking community action.



STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CATEGORIES FOR ANALYSIS	DO-IT-YOURSELF	DIRECTIVE PLANNING	PERSUASIVE POWER	COMMUNITY CLASH
OVERALL PROGRAM GOALS	Improve the understanding and ability of citizens to solve community problems Create problem-solving structures in the community and assist in maintaining existing ones	Diagnose problems of the community Prescribe solutions to the problems	Redistribute power, decision making and resources Change policies of organizations and agencies	Upset the existing system
MODE OF OPERATION	Discussion and communication among a wide range of individuals and groups Acceptance of new ideas based on information making sense to citizens	Fact finding and analysis Set agenda for development of communities Coordinate programs of agencies and organizations "Citizens" utilized as a "sounding board" for program legitimization	Coercive tactics Works within the system Influences the behavior of citizens or officials by stressing legitimate sanctions if the situation is not changed	Aggressive behavior Violence directed at individuals, groups or physical facilities
METHODS OF ACHIEVING GOALS	(Two-way communication) Personal conversations Group discussions Interagency Councils Workshops	(One-way communication) Surveys Planning documents and controls to some extent Technical advisory committees Technical assistance Reports	Governmental action; i. e., school integration, pollution control, zoning, grants-in-aid Direct action by citizens; i.e., strikes, boycotts, marches, sit-ins, "buttonholing legislators"	Riots Burning Bombing Attacking law enforcement officers Stopping farmers on the way to market
SOURCE OF CONTROL	Local citizens and officials	Professionals and technicians	Officials Citizens	Extremists and militant groups
BENEFICIARY	Total community	Total community Segment of population	Total community Special interest groups	No one benefits
LIMITATIONS	Limited amount of resources at community level	Absence of problem solving capabilities at the community level	Mutual trust and working rapport is absent which may hinder future developmental efforts	High cost in the loss of human lives and the destruction of property

REACHING OUT TO CITIZENS

The development of a community depends to a large extent on the ingenuity and ability of its local leadership. Citizens and their leaders can be effectively involved in the problem-solving process to bring about change and meet their personal needs and aspirations as well as those of their communities. This is usually accomplished through groups, organizations and agencies working cooperatively.

To solve community problems, we must have several ingredients. First, we must have community leadership. This includes people who are identified as being influential leaders in the community as well as capable people who can be developed into leaders. Secondly, we must have real problems with which to deal. These are sometimes the things that bother the people in the community or "bug them," and sometimes the problems are deeper than that. And, finally, we need the service of dedicated and concerned professionals willing to work for the good of the community.

The instigation of a community problem identification survey is an efficient and effective means for identifying, utilizing and developing the talents of large numbers of potential and actual community leaders.

Without local, meaningful participation by citizens, action seldom takes place except where government is willing to bear the full burden of such action. Experience has shown that government participation is most prone to criticism and often results in ill feeling within the community. Decisions on what is to be done, how to do it, and the conditions under which it will be done require a partnership among the local people and agencies. Agencies must play a supportive rather than a decision-making role. Thereby, citizens make the decisions and agencies help them find the information and resources they need.

We believe it is possible to strengthen and broaden the community structures through which citizens may participate more effectively in developing their communities. In order to accomplish this, we recommend that the Extension Service provide leadership in organizing and assisting community development committees at the appropriate community level.

METHODS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Through past experience and research in community problem solving, a number of methods designed to accomplish human as well as physical development have evolved. These methods of community development provide the professional with the necessary tools to "help people help themselves." The major concern of this Handbook is with one of these methods: the problem identification survey method. Other methods of community development will be described briefly. The brevity of their description is not meant to imply their lack of importance in community development activities.

TALKING WITH FOLKS

The professional engaged in community development work must be able to relate to people in the community. This requires the professional to be in continuous communication with the individuals in his locality so that he can be sensitive to the particular character of their needs. When the professional becomes accepted and is able to "speak the language of the people with whom he works" then he can create the realization among individuals that the opportunity exists for a different environmental situation. This realization becomes a reality as the professional, because of his acceptance in the locality, is able to raise questions, present information and influence decisions that will lead citizens to take action to improve the quality of their environment.

COMMUNITY EVALUATION

Community problems are of such a complex nature today that they need to be studied in a systematic way so that people and public officials can make sound decisions for action. Through a concerted effort in assessing both the assets and liabilities of their community, they come to realize that: (a) problems are oftentimes interrelated, (b) solutions may be so complicated as to require the assistance of professionals in a specialized field of study, and (c) people must have the major say in their community development goals. Generally, as a direct result of the evaluation, a plan for action is developed which is acceptable to the people, public officials and professionals alike.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING WORKSHOP

The workshop is a series of small group sessions in which individuals become involved in the logical problem-solving process as it applies to a "demonstration problem" with which they are familiar. After the involvement of individuals in small group decision-making activities, the principles of group process and of motivation for change are analyzed. The workshop is conducted for the purpose of encouraging: (a) individuals to develop a scientific attitude in approaching community problems, and (b) individuals having conflicting viewpoints to discuss their differences in a free and open discussion. Hopefully, the techniques learned by the individuals through their participation in the workshop will be applied to the immediate problems their communities face.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION SURVEY

The problem identification survey is a method used to identify citizens to serve on a community development committee at the local level. In the process of identifying committee members a list of community problems is obtained.

The community development committee, once organized, reviews community problems--alternative solutions to the problems are identified and analyzed by subcommittees or task forces which include people not serving on overall committees.

The professional engaged in community development should use the method which is most applicable to his particular situation. However, it should be acknowledged that the professional may want to use a combination of these methods in the achievement of development in a democratic manner.

COMMUNITY PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION SURVEY

In order to achieve success with the Community Problem Identification Survey, several steps must be followed. The following sections will explain in detail the individuals necessary for the implementation of the survey ("Cast of Actors") and the seven steps necessary to initiate this type of survey in your community ("Conducting the Survey").

CAST OF ACTORS

As can be seen from the facing diagram, there are several individuals whose assistance is necessary for the success of the problem identification survey. These people make up what we will call the Cast of Actors. A brief description of their roles and responsibilities follows:

The Survey Advisor is usually a university-associated staff member who organizes the Survey Steering Committee and acts as an advisor to the local Community Development Committee. He is generally a person familiar with reputational survey technique. Among his duties are:

Meeting and working with the local development committee, explaining the survey process, how it works and what the results can bring;

Checking the list of people to be interviewed during the survey, seeing that the lists are in order, that there is proper representation, and inviting selected academic and state leaders as participant observers;

FACE TO FACE

Conducting in-depth orientation to familiarize team and committee members with the survey process, mailing publicity news to the chairman, sending time schedules to the participant observers, and making the team assignments for each morning of the interviewing;

Analyzing and categorizing the cards with the secretary, preparing a summary of the problems which people identified as existent in their communities.

PHONE CALL

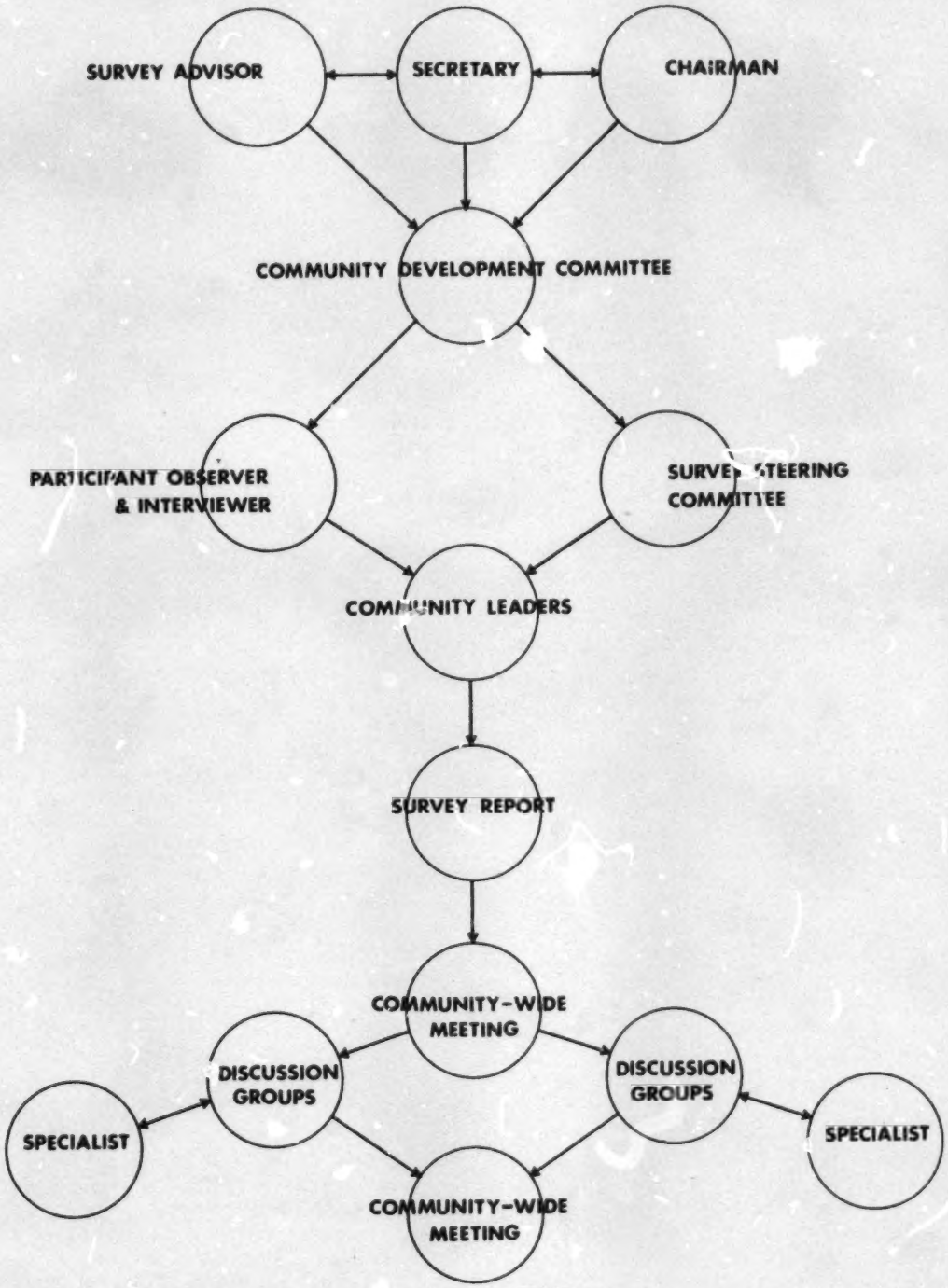
The Chairman and Members of the Community Development Committee comprise the local agency and/or organization representatives who are interested in mobilizing their efforts for the betterment of their community. The Chairman is coordinator for all committee activities. Their duties include:

Preparing a list of key community leaders to be interviewed and a list of other prominent individuals who, because of their job, might require a courtesy interview;

Preparing information for the news media;

Assisting the Survey Advisor in any way when he makes the team assignments for each day, assisting the secretary in mapping out the homes of the interviewees for easier and more efficient travel;

Arranging for the time and place of the first community-wide meeting--at this time, the Chairman and Committee members, the Survey Advisor and selected leaders present an analysis of the survey.


SURVEY ADVISOR
SECRETARY
CHAIRMAN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
PARTICIPANT OBSERVER & INTERVIEWER
SURVEY STEERING COMMITTEE
COMMUNITY LEADERS
SURVEY REPORT
COMMUNITY-WIDE MEETING
DISCUSSION GROUPS
DISCUSSION GROUPS
SPECIALIST
SPECIALIST
COMMUNITY-WIDE MEETING

The Secretary must be a reliable and efficient person. Her talents are essential to a smooth-running problem identification survey. The Secretary's duties include:

Working closely with the Survey Advisor, making it possible for him to concentrate his efforts on the logistic problems and smooth operation of the teams rather than working with the cards;

Preparing the survey cards and keeping a master file current, retyping cards when necessary;

Helping the Chairman prepare location maps or directions to the sites of people to be interviewed.

The Survey Steering Panel is a group of recognized community-minded citizens who act as a source of information for the Community Development Committee. They assist the Committee with construction of the initial list of people to be interviewed by supplying names of community leaders.

The Selected Community Leaders are the people to be interviewed and to whom the Community Development Committee looks for identification of community problems.

The Participant Observer and the Interviewer make up the team which conducts the interviewing for the survey. The Participant Observer is usually a state or area representative of an agency or organization (including university-associated) who legitimizes the scientific study being conducted by the Committee. His presence during the interview imparts to the person being interviewed that this survey has significant meaning. His duties include:

Writing down information concerning community problems as perceived by the interviewee;

Allowing the interviewer to conduct the interview, taking care not to lead the conversation or influence answers;

Discussing and analyzing the interview with the interviewer, checking the statements written by the observer to be sure that the problems are written as the person intended.

The Interviewer is the local contact person who actually conducts the interview. His duties include:

Telling the Participant Observer the name of the interviewee and some background information so that he is familiar with each person interviewed;

Analyzing the interview with the Participant Observer, looking for ways to strengthen the following interviews;

Turning in cards to the Secretary with enough information on them so that she can identify the individual and problems listed;

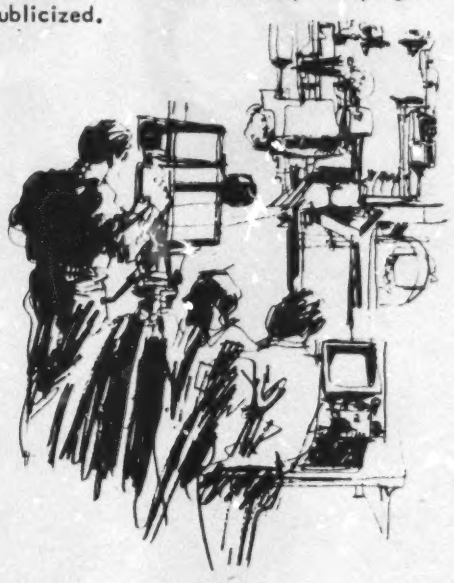
Contacting the people to be interviewed, making sure that they understand that the Community Development Committee in conjunction with the university is conducting a scientific survey as to the needs and problems of their area, etc.

Keeping the Survey Advisor informed of the progress being made.

People in the field of Mass Media are important links in the area of community development. Quite often, the concerns of the mass media are much the same as those of the people in the field of community development. It has proven true in a number of cases that unless the editor or local broadcaster is involved in the solution of community problems, the community development program may not be successful. Proper respect for public opinion is held by even the most powerful of community leaders, and public opinion is influenced by media.

It is difficult to decide whether or not to solicit for publicity for the current development programs. Sometimes it is best if news of community plans spreads by word of mouth. Other times it is best to have programmed publicity. Whatever is decided on publicity-wise, plans should be decided well in advance of the survey. Sometimes editors and broadcasters may not want to become a part of the community development programs.

They may prefer remaining independent--free to criticize and maintain a "watchdog" stance over the community--a traditional role for mass media to assume. The best posture for the Community Development Committee to take is to invite media personnel to participate in the programs and let editors and broadcasters decide whether or not this is an appropriate role for them. Discussion with media people will help answer questions of when and if some of the development programs should be publicized.



CONDUCTING THE SURVEY

Step 1: Understanding by Staff

Usually, the Extension staff calls together concerned professionals to discuss the possibility of conducting a problem identification survey. These professionals come from local organizations and agencies, such as the U. S. Department of Agriculture, chamber of commerce, community colleges, area planning agencies, health or welfare departments, community action groups, or local governments. Experience in several states shows that Extension is equally successful in working with all of these agencies. In this Handbook the local professional group will be referred to as the Community Development Committee.

Timing is important to the success of any program, including the problem identification survey. If the Community Development Committee decides that such a survey is in the best interests of their community, a specific week should be set aside for this project.

A university Extension staff member usually assists and advises the Committee on the survey. This Survey Advisor arranges a meeting date with the Committee for the purpose of an in-depth explanation of the survey process to insure the maximum success from this educational effort.

Step 2: Survey Advisor Meets With The Community Development Committee

The meeting should include the entire county Extension staff and the Committee members. The Survey Advisor discusses the possibilities, objectives and work involved in the survey. At this time, a commitment must be made as to who will cooperate in the survey, when it will be conducted, and who will provide the secretarial assistance. It should be pointed out that the survey will be conducted scientifically by the Committee in cooperation with the university staff. The survey should result in more local people being involved in programs which will better meet expressed community needs.

Step 3: The Listing Process

Through the survey, leaders throughout the community will be identified. The preliminary list of leaders will include names contributed by the Committee, as well as those contributed by a few already recognized community leaders. Each member of the Community Development Committee will be asked to prepare a list of 15-20 names of people whom they consider to be the top community-minded individuals in the county. This list should widely represent all segments of the community, and should be an independent effort with no consultation among Committee members. The Extension staff, as supporting members of the Committee, will be asked to submit a list of names also.

Several community leaders (4-6) should be selected by the Community Development Committee and asked to contribute a list of 15-20 names. These leaders are usually people who are too busy to serve on the Committee, but whose ideas are worthy of being used in the survey process. They should be informed that the Committee is planning to conduct a survey in conjunction with the university. Experience has shown that there is a need for all segments of the community to be represented (men, women, white, black, and all age ranges).

Step 4: Name Selection

For each name submitted in the listing process, the Secretary should type a three-by-five card with the pertinent information such as name, address, zip code, and telephone number. Additional information could be coded on the cards if so desired. The second and subsequent times that the name is listed, a mark will be placed after the name. Therefore, if the card has the name only, it would indicate that this individual had been mentioned one time. If it has two marks on it, it would indicate the name had been mentioned three times.

As a rule of thumb, cards having two or more marks will go into a file of those people to be interviewed. This original list of interviewees should contain approximately 30-40 names.

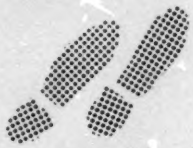
In every community there are certain individuals who, because of their position, should be interviewed even if their names do not appear on the original list. These individuals may be politicians, school superintendents, judges, or owners of local newspapers or radio and TV stations. The Community Development Committee should decide which of these individuals should receive a courtesy interview. These names become part of the original list and are treated the same as all other selected names.

Step 5. Letters

It is a good practice for the Chairman of the Community Development Committee to send a letter to the supervisors of the individual Committee members (agency staff) informing them of the work of the Committee and the dates of the survey. This procedure will verify the members' participation during the assigned dates.

Letters should be written to individuals who will be able to assist in the survey as Participant Observers. The letter should confirm the dates that the Participant Observer will be involved in the survey.

This correspondence should outline a time schedule which lists the date and time of the orientation meeting and the dates of the interviews. Each letter should request a confirmation of the dates by the participant. Whenever possible, it is thoughtful to send a follow-up letter thanking individuals for their participation in the survey.



Step 6: A Week Before the Survey

The Survey Advisor should check with the Chairman of the Community Development Committee to make sure that previous assignments have been completed satisfactorily and to make last minute adjustments. The agenda for the orientation meeting on the first day of the survey should be discussed.

This is the time to review the lists of Interviewers to see that they are sufficient in number and appropriately paired with the Participant Observers.

Appointments should now be made by the Chairman or members of the Community Development Committee with the people to be interviewed on the first and second days of the survey. The schedule of these appointments should be made available to the Interviewers and the Participant Observers.

This is the appropriate time to set the date for the community-wide meeting so that this information can be given to the people as they are interviewed.

Step 7: The Week of the Survey

MONDAY

There will be an orientation meeting of the interview team including the Participant Observers. The Survey Advisor should explain the background of the survey and the role of the Interviewer and the Participant Observer.

The interview questions should be reviewed for complete understanding. Each team will ask questions in exactly the same way in order that the interviewee will not be biased by the way the questions are asked. Each Interviewer should read the questions from the 3 by 5 card as stated.

The time schedule should be discussed and revised if necessary. The events to follow the survey should be reviewed, including participation in the first community-wide meeting. A demonstration interview should be conducted so that each team member can see how to handle some of the problems that may arise.

And now the moment has arrived for the teams to go into the community to conduct the interviews according to the appointments previously made! (See section on methods of conducting the interview.) Please remember to ask questions exactly as written.

If at all possible, the teams should meet together at about 4:00 PM on the Monday afternoon. It is a time for team members to discuss their experiences and problems. This meeting will enable the teams to "iron out" any difficulties and better prepare for the Tuesday interview schedule.

TUESDAY

There will be a brief meeting Tuesday morning to bring the team members up to date on their interviews on the previous day. A county map is often helpful at this time. Participant Observers are encouraged to work with a different team member each day. Orient any participant who was not present on Monday.

As interviews are completed, all cards should be returned to the Secretary. It is suggested that the problems of each person interviewed be listed on a separate 3 by 5 card. An "I" or some other identifying mark should be placed on the file cards to signify that that person has been interviewed.

In addition to keeping the cards up to date, the Secretary should locate on a map the residence of each person interviewed so that the teams can see the type of coverage. If necessary, adjustments may be made to insure that a particular geographical area has been covered (refer to names suggested for original list).

WEDNESDAY

It is suggested that Wednesday be a free day to allow all local staff members to catch up with their regularly assigned duties. Later in the day, the Community Development Committee and the Survey Advisor should meet briefly to analyze the progress to date. Any areas not covered should be discussed and adjustments made.

Those individuals with three or more checks on their name cards who have not been interviewed should be assigned to team members for appointments on Thursday. Friday can be utilized if it is impossible to schedule the interview for Thursday.

THURSDAY

A short meeting should be held to bring all people up to date and orient any new participants. New teams will be formed at this time.

Scheduled interviews will be completed.

As cards are returned, the Secretary will keep them up to date. A team member will try to arrange an interview on Friday for any person whose name was checked four or more times and who was not previously interviewed.

FRIDAY

A briefing session should be held to check signals with all team members.

Attempts will be made to contact people previously missed. Scheduled interviews will be carried out.

The Survey Advisor should start compiling data on suggested problems and categorizing them.

If at all possible, all interviews should be completed within the week. The survey process builds support for more effective programs. Most team members will find this week to be most rewarding in terms of both the program and personal growth.

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

The Committee member (Interviewer) should take the lead in conducting the interview. The first task is to state who you are, what you are doing, why you are conducting the survey, and what you intend to do with the information. Emphasize that the survey is being conducted scientifically, and that it is aimed at discovering what people in the community consider to be the major community problems and needs.

The interview team (Interviewer and Participant Observer) should allow time for the person being interviewed to relax. Mention that the answers to all questions asked in the survey-interview will be confidential; that all information will be compiled to come up with broad areas of concern to citizens. Informal conversation between the interview team and interviewee will break the ice and often will lead to a more candid conversation.

Procedure

Each team member will be given a survey card containing the questions to be asked during the interview. In every case each question should be read exactly as it appears on the card. This will insure the credibility and integrity of the survey. A sample of the survey card follows.

SURVEY CARD

* All information is confidential

1. Will you indicate some concerns or problems as you see them in the (community name) Area?
   (Community problems--not personal problems)

2. Please give us names of individuals whose good judgment you respect and who are concerned about the community. (Men, women, black, and white)
   (Please check your top five (5) names--Optional)

3. Please give us names of individuals who are interested in and concerned about young people. (Adults and youth)

As the Committee member (Interviewer) asks the questions, the Participant Observer should write the replies on a 3 by 5 card. When asking the questions about who the interviewee considers to have good judgment in the community, the interviewer should take care not to use the word "leader." The purpose of the question is to determine whose judgment and character the interviewee respects. The interviewee should be reminded that the Committee is concerned with representing as broad a cross section of people in the community as possible. It is, therefore, important that all groups within the community be represented; i. e., men, women, ethnic groups, youth, etc.

Remember to thank the person interviewed and inform him that he will be receiving a copy of the findings of the survey.

HOW TO SUMMARIZE AND ANALYZE IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

After completion of the survey, the Community Development Committee and the Survey Advisor should analyze the results and prepare a summary of the findings. The categories listed below were arrived at through Louisiana and Virginia surveys. Under each category are listed the areas of concern relating to the broad category.

Community Relations

Loss of educated and talented youth
Increase in the numbers of people not wanting to work
Change in moral standards and values of modern society
Lack of competent leadership
Need for better race relations

Motivation and Leadership

Adverse attitude of citizens toward change in their communities
Lack of interest and pride in community
Lack of communication and understanding by leaders and citizenry
Unwillingness of people and institutions to reach out and help people who need help (the socially and culturally disadvantaged)
Lack of feeling of "community" among citizenry

Community Facility Needs

More low-income and middle-income housing (both salable and rentable)
Better shopping facilities in local community to prevent loss of shopping dollars from the community area
Need for more parking space adjacent to the downtown areas
Adequate road system in urban and rural areas
Adequate trash collection and disposal
Concern for water resources
Ecological concerns for environment

Recreation

Need to develop tourism
Lack of recreational facilities for young people
Need for community improvement and beautification programs
Concern for the growing litter problem on roads and empty areas
Need for more recreation programs to be run through the school system
Need for an expanded adult education program
Need for new schools and reorganization of some school systems; i. e., upgrading of local systems; institution of preschool educational programs

Health and Welfare

Inadequacy of medical facilities and staff, including ambulance service
Need for more mental health facilities
Housing and transportation provisions for the aged
Need for more explanation and understanding of the welfare programs
Overabundance of individuals on welfare programs

Public Policy

Burden of high taxes
Need for local government to find new sources of revenue
Lack of adequate law enforcement
Need for more public services, including pollution controls
Need for planning and zoning in community
Reorganization of local government

Employment and Jobs

Insufficient job opportunities; insufficient job training
Evaluation of new work attitudes
Need for more skilled employment opportunities
Need for jobs for the young
More industrial development in non-metropolitan areas

Agriculture

Diversify agricultural base
Low income of farmers
Farm labor problems
Cost/price squeeze on all farmers
Need for improvement of education of farmers
Inefficiency of small farms and need for additional income from new enterprises

CARRYING OUT THE COMMUNITY WIDE MEETING

COORDINATOR PLANS WITH THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting between the coordinator and the Community Development Committee prior to the community-wide meeting is important. At this meeting the coordinator can discuss the significance of the survey results as they apply to each agency's program.

Plans for the community-wide meeting should be reviewed. The meeting should include a statement of problems identified and allow time for small group discussion about the problems. The coordinator should discuss "Hints for Discussion Group Leaders" so that there will be a working consensus on what is to be accomplished at the meeting. The Chairman should be prepared to handle the establishment of the priority of problems if there is any doubt when the groups report. Time limits should be agreed upon so the meeting can end on time.

MEETING INVITATIONS

All the individuals who have been interviewed should be invited to the community-wide meeting. In addition, local officials who may have been missed during the survey, interested faculty members from local colleges and the news media should be sent invitations. A reminder card could be sent a few days before the meeting. Sometimes a phone call is necessary to insure good participation.

THE COMMUNITY-WIDE MEETING

Make arrangements for people to register as they come in. The results of the survey are usually distributed as the discussion groups are formed. News media representatives can be given a copy prior to the presentation.

After the findings of the survey have been noted by the Survey Advisor and members of the Committee, plans should be made for the results to be presented at a community-wide meeting.

Plans for such a meeting should be made well in advance of the actual date. To be most effective, the results of the survey should be made known and publicized no later than one month after conducting the survey. Topics for discussion, roles and responsibilities for Committee members should be assigned early.

Introduction

After the Chairman has introduced the members of the Community Development Committee, he should explain some of the background for the development work in that particular area. A brief explanation outlining the basic methods of the community-wide survey should then follow. At this point, the Chairman can describe the methods that were used in identifying the key people in the community and the problems which they identified as basic concerns within the community.

Results of the Survey

After the preliminary discussion about the survey, the results should be presented. It should be stressed that the results are based on the responses of the people interviewed. All the problems cited by those interviewed should be placed in broad categories (see categories and problems listed thereunder on page

The Chairman should take care to mention the rank in importance of each problem listed under the broad category. It is often helpful to provide a more in-depth discussion of the ten most important problems as selected by the interviewees. These ten top problems may be a combination of smaller problems. For example, one problem may be the need for more jobs and another problem might be the need for some manufacturing plants. Both problems combined fall under the category of "Need for More Job Opportunities."

Discussion Groups

All participants should have the opportunity to express their views within the Discussion Group. The group size should be between 8 and 10 people to allow individual expression.

A very good way of dividing into groups is to have the participants count off, with all 1's going to group one; all 2's going to group two, etc. For example, if you have 40 people, have them count off 1 to 4, thereby having four discussion groups of 10 people each. If space is limited, and/or the overall group large, you may have to have more people in each discussion group. Another method of group division is to use name tags with numbers or color code the name tags using each color to signify the different discussion groups.

A resource person (a Committee member or member of the university Extension Service or related agency personnel can serve in this capacity) should be assigned to each discussion group. He should have been previously oriented as to the objectives and goals of the discussion. Each group should decide on which problems they think a citizens' group can effectively do something about within a reasonable period of time.

If refreshments are being served, it may be appropriate to serve them while in the discussion groups.

After the discussion groups have terminated, the meeting will reconvene and the spokesman for each discussion group will report the top problems as determined by his group. If there is a wide variance in the selection of the top problems among the groups, then some method will have to be devised to ascertain the ranking priority of the problems. One method would be to use a weighted score. After all groups have listed their results, then the totals would be added and the ones receiving the most points will receive top priority. Another means of selecting the top priority would be to have the group vote for the problem that they think is the most important. Each member would have only one vote and the problem receiving the most votes would then be given top priority.

Date For the Next Meeting

The Chairman should explain that the Community Development Committee will try to obtain a resource person who is well versed in the subject matter of the selected problem. This person will be asked to talk at another meeting. The date for the next meeting should be selected before the close of the community-wide meeting. This date should allow sufficient time to line up the resource person. At the same time, care should be taken not to put off the second meeting so long that the people will lose their enthusiasm.

Where to Go From Here

In order to show the participants that the results of the survey are merely one phase of the community development process, make people aware of what the process involves, and some of the steps necessary to arrive at a successful conclusion. Try to get someone to give the presentation who can inspire and lift the enthusiasm of the concerned citizens, thus giving them the incentive that they need.

HINTS FOR DISCUSSION GROUPS

1. As soon as your group assembles, explain the objective of the discussion groups; i. e., deciding on the two or three main topics of concern.

2. Establish a time limit so that the groups can report back.

3. Select a Recorder and a Contact Person.

   a. The Recorder is to write down the problems as mentioned by the group and prepare the top three problems in order of their priority.

   b. The Contact Person will report the top three problems as selected by his discussion group when the entire group is reconvened and will work with the Community Development Committee in planning future meetings.

4. Problems need not be limited to those mentioned most often in the problem identification survey. Please discuss problem priorities and not solutions.

5. After everyone has had an opportunity to discuss the problems, help them establish some priority for the problems which will be reported back to the entire group.

KEEPING THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS GOING

Broad action programs involving lay participation are much more difficult, but potentially more successful, than programs planned solely by professionals. Significant community change has been proven to take place in the form of narrow, specialized projects. Take, for example, a committee organized for the development of industry. Its "oneness" of purpose can serve as a spearhead for very rapid industrial growth. In a broad-fronted program there is less imbalance, but there are reasons why the segmented approach usually occurs. First, any community is limited in its amount of available time, resources and energies; second, people are more concerned with specific problems than with improving the broad front; and third, the broad approach involves so many complexities that it is difficult for the layman to comprehend it all without considerable study.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

A community development institute is an intensive series of workshops conducted on either a multi-county or county basis for representatives of organizations, agencies and interested citizens. The purpose of the institute is to improve the participant's skills in solving community problems. Each workshop session consists of a presentation of a topic by a resource person followed by small informal group discussions.

Possible topics to be considered for presentations during the course of the institute are as follows: local and area trends, the essence of community development, strategies for community development, methods used to determine community needs, and community decision making. The listing of topics here are certainly not exhaustive of all the possibilities, but are cited to serve mainly as examples.

Once each group has made a brief report as to the content of their discussion, a general discussion period follows whereby workshop participants address their questions to a resource person or make brief statements on the topic under consideration. Through the interaction of the workshop, participants can understand community development theory and practice as related to the immediate concerns of the community.

The Establishment of Priorities and a Plan of Action

If action is the ultimate goal of a community study-planning program, then the process should go beyond the study-recommendation stage. A study of the results of 500 community surveys indicates that there are three conditions usually associated with studies which only "catch dust." First, ineffective studies usually involved a high proportion of professionals and very few citizens; second, most of the ineffective studies only listed conditions, needs and recommendations; third, the studies did not develop a plan of action for carrying out the goals decided upon. The findings of this study of surveys lead to the conclusion that if any type of community survey is worth doing at all, it should involve the participation of lay citizens, the establishment of a priority of goals, and a plan of action to implement these goals.

COMMUNITY PROBLEMS
1. INSUFFICIENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES
2. WAYS TO FINANCE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
3. LACK OF RECREATION FACILITIES
4. UNATTRACTIVE COMMUNITY SURROUNDINGS

Contacting the Resource Person

The person selected to contact the outside resource person should do so as soon as possible after the community meeting. If possible, make plans to meet with this person or speak with him over the phone. It is very difficult to explain through a letter what the resource person is expected to do at the meeting. In talking with him, explain the background of the survey, giving him a copy of the results and the findings of the discussion groups. In discussing the alternatives to the problems selected by the discussion groups, explain that we are not looking for a solution to the problem or for a single approach. It should also be emphasized that the citizens' group will make the decisions and take the leadership in the project.

After explaining the survey and its history, discuss the proposed agenda and date of the next meeting. Ask the resource person if he would be willing to participate. If he is unable to attend or feels that he is not qualified to speak on the matter, ask for suggestions as to who to contact. It is very important to get firm commitments as soon as possible so that publicity may be prepared prior to the meeting.

THE MEETING

Arrangements should be made for the people to register as they come in.

Introduction

The Chairman should introduce other members of the Community Development Committee. If there are many people who have not been at the community - wide meeting, he may wish to explain some of the background for the community development work.

Review of the Survey

The results of the survey should be briefly reviewed. The top ten problems as determined by the survey, as well as the top three or four problems singled out at the community-wide meeting should be emphasized. This review is for the purpose of bringing members up-to-date. This is not the time for discussion.

Game Plan

The participants need to know more about the entire process and what the Community Development Committee has in mind. The game plan will describe in brief detail the community development process and the steps as visualized by the Community Development Committee.

Problem Discussed by Resource People

The resource person should discuss the problems and some of the alternate solutions including the advantages and disadvantages of each. Time should be allowed for questions from the audience. The audience should be reminded, however, that they will have another chance for further discussion when they get into their small groups.

Discussion Groups

A member of the Community Development Committee should give the charge to the discussion groups. The purpose of the charge is so everyone will understand exactly what is expected when they go into their smaller discussion groups. Again, it should be stressed that they are discussing alternate means of solving the problem. They are not to make a decision on the course to follow at this meeting.

EVALUATION

After the first meeting of the citizen action committee, the coordinator and the Community Development Committee should meet with the chairman of the citizens' committee and determine the next step for each subcommittee. This might include obtaining additional resource people to provide further information regarding the problem.

The member of the Community Development Committee assigned to work with the citizen action committee should keep in close contact with its chairman to make certain that the process does not bog down.

As soon as possible after the community-wide meeting, the coordinator and the Chairman, plus other interested Community Development Committee members, should evaluate the meeting and start making plans for keeping the process going.

The contact person for each discussion group will work with this group to provide for citizen input into the planning sessions. Possible resource people to discuss the two top problems should be considered. It may be a local person, or someone from a state agency, or from a university. You will be looking for someone who is knowledgeable about the subject and who is able to present alternatives. He will need to understand the advantages as well as the disadvantages of each alternative.

A decision must be made as to who will try to contact the resource people selected for the follow-up meeting.

COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

In addition to the top priority problem decided upon in the discussion groups, the Community Development Committee should organize subcommittees to work on other problems of community concern. The "citizen action committee" should meet as soon as possible after the community-wide meeting in order to organize their subcommittees and plan on how to "attack" their particular problems. The Chairman should then inform the Community Development Committee of their existence and ask them for assistance. In most cases, a Committee member will be assigned to work with the various subcommittees. The citizen action committee should meet often to study and plan ways to implement proposals. Each subcommittee should report at the community-wide meeting so that everyone can be informed of their progress.

FUTURE MEETINGS

From time to time it will be necessary for the Community Development Committee to call another community-wide meeting. Citizens' subcommittees will be given an opportunity to report progress. This will give them an opportunity to enlist additional aid in carrying out their projects and also keep the rest of the citizens informed.

The main purpose of the meeting, however, would be to insert a new problem into the process. A resource person would be invited to speak on one of the other top priority problems. The problem should be one about which the citizens have shown concern. The resource person should discuss possible alternatives in working on the problem. He should try to encourage the citizens to organize a committee to do further study.

After the resource person has spoken and the subcommittees reported, the meeting should be divided into groups. Each of the previously organized subcommittees could have a meeting, and those citizens interested in the new problem could meet with the resource person.

This last group should follow a procedure similar to the "organizing for action" phase in that they should discuss the problem further, and then decide if they wish to continue. If they do, then they should select their chairman and secretary and set a date for their next meeting.

It would be at this type of meeting that the subcommittees which have solved their problem could report this achievement, be congratulated and then officially disband to allow members to give more time and effort to new subcommittees being formed. The significance of incorporating community leaders and other lay citizens into the study planning process has been stated this way:

"Probably due, in part, to our particular form of government in the United States, lay advisory groups to support official agencies have come into widespread use. These devices are reported to serve varying functions, such as: (1) a way of getting the layman's point of view structured into official plans: (2) a sounding board by which public officials may test out plans developed by technical specialists; (3) a way of educating the public and gaining public support; (4) a way of gaining access to certain professional and technical abilities not otherwise available; and (5) a means of getting coordination between loosely structured political factions or other basic divisions within the community."

The Cooperative Extension Service, as well as other agencies, has long made use of lay citizen's advisory committees to assist them in planning programs. If an established community organization can assume the basic sponsorship, while inviting representation or cosponsorship from other organizations, agencies and groups, the chances for success are greater. This method has the advantage of maintaining communication through volunteer help. There is no need for the Community Development Committee to try to organize a committee to work in competition with an existing organized group. It would be a better use of manpower if the efforts were combined.

Citizens' subcommittees should be formed to further study each top priority problem. These committees will need someone to call meetings and keep a record of important points; but there is no need for a formal organization. As they progress, they may need more information, other resource people and the opportunity to report their progress and needs at a community-wide meeting.